

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Response to the obviousness rejections

Applicants have reviewed and considered the Office Action and the cited references mailed January 25th, 2006, and would like to thank the Examiner for his indication of allowable subject matter.

In response thereto, claim 7 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; and independent claim 1 has been amended. As a result, claims 1-6 and 8-18 are presently pending in the application.

Indeed, independent claim 1 has been amended so as to include therein the limitations of former dependent claim 7, considered allowable. Consequently, claim 7 has been canceled.

Furthermore, due to the cancellation of former claim 7, the dependency of former claim 8 has been modified accordingly so as to now depend on this new amended independent claim 1.

Moreover, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite because of the expressions "during opening of a corresponding one of the drawers" and "during closing of a corresponding one of the drawers". These expressions have been amended to respectively read "during a first configuration of the interlocking system" and "during a second configuration of the interlocking system", thus without adding new subject matter, so as to specifically be directed only to the interlocking system, as requested by the Examiner.

The objection raised against "stopping elements" disclosed on page 7 and "actuation bar" disclosed on page 13 of the specification under 37 CFR 1.83(a) is respectfully traversed for the following reasons:

37 CFR 1.83(a) relates to "*conventional features disclosed in the description and claims*" (underlined is ours for sake of argumentation), whereas the "stopping elements" and "actuation bar" disclosed respectively on pages 7 and 13 of the specification are not specified in the claims of the present application, but rather are simply given as ways of examples for carrying out variations of the present invention, as explained in the corresponding passages of the aforementioned pages, thus the presence of expressions such as "This *can* be done in *multiple* ways, e.g. by inserting stopping elements (not shown)... The channel 18 *can also* have a specific length so that..." (see page 7, lines 25-30).

Furthermore, attention is drawn to 37 CFR 1.71 where it is specified that the specification *"is required to be in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms so as to enable any person skilled in the art or science to which the invention or discovery appertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same"*. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the aforementioned "stopping elements" and "actuation bar" given as ways of descriptive examples only, is a full, clear, concise, and exact terms to enable a person skilled in the art to make and use variations of the invention (indeed, a person skilled in the art would know what these elements are in view of the description). Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that in the contrary, that is, if all the different examples not defined in the claims and mentioned in the description would be illustrated in the drawings, it would make for an unclear, excessively long, and ambiguous patent specification. Reconsideration is thus respectfully requested.

Claim 13 has been amended so as to comply with 37 CFR 1.83(a), as requested by the Examiner. More particularly, the expression objected to has been deleted, as suggested by the Examiner.

Moreover, the Abstract of the disclosure has been amended so as to replace "comprising" in line 2, by the expression "including", so as to comply with MPEP § 608.01(b), as also requested by the Examiner.

Hence, in view of the above modifications and information, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claim 1 is now new and inventive over the prior art cited, because of the introduction of the limitations of former claim 7, considered allowable, as indicated by the Examiner, and that the rest of the specification is now compliant with the rules and guidelines. Since all the other dependent claims depend all directly or indirectly on claim 1, and since these dependent claims define distinctively the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention, it is believed that the dependent claims are also new and non-obvious, and thus allowable.

It is to be understood though that no admission is made nor implied by the present amendment as to the fact that the prior art cited may be relevant. Indeed, this amendment is made solely to expedite the prosecution of the present application.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance, reconsideration of the present application and a favorable response are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone

conference would expedite issuance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (202) 861-1696.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036 with reference to Attorney Docket No. **87367.1800**.

Respectfully submitted,
BAKER & HOSTETLER LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo J. Jennings', is written over the printed name.

Leo J. Jennings
Reg. No. 32,902

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Washington Square, Suite 1100
1050 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 861-1500
Fax: (202) 861-1783